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Novel Denies CIA Pays His Legal Fees

Gordon Novel Sunday denied a charges by New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison that the CIA was paying his legal fees.

But he said in jest he'd forward the bills to the Central Intelligence Agency.

His Ohio attorney, Jerry Weiner, of Columbus, was not immediately available for comment. However, last week Weiner said Novel had worked once for the CIA, in connection with the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961. He said that was the only time Novel was involved with the CIA.

In a letter to CIA chief, Richard Helms, Sunday, the former New Orleans bar operator said, "today, according to the Jolly Green Giant, or better the Cardiff Giant (Mr. Garrison) you guys are paying my legal fees to my Louisiana and Ohio attorneys."

"That's strange," he added, "since my attorneys are crying and pressing me because of not being paid for my various legal wrecking moves of this jolly big fraud."

Garrison named Novel as a material witness in his investigation of the Kennedy assassination and subpenaed him to appear before a grand jury probing an alleged plot to murder the President.

Novel left New Orleans and came to Columbus—later filing suit against Garrison and his financial backers in connection with the material witness accusation.

Louisiana authorities have been trying to extradite him, but so far without success.

Ohio sent back the first set of extradition papers for "technical error." An aide to Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes said Friday a second set of extradition papers had been received but they were "still defective."